

Handout 5-4: Managing Emergency Public Information

Managing Emergency Public Information
Emergency Public Information
<p>Emergency public information serves many important functions. It can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Save lives and reduce injury. Knowing the proper protective actions to take enables people to reduce their risk.• Protect property and the environment. Understanding how to mitigate risk to property and the environment may lessen the damage inflicted by disasters.• Facilitate the tactical response by calming fears and managing expectations. People who know what to expect are more likely to follow instructions and allow responders to do their jobs.• Educate and inform the public and change behavior or attitudes. An educated public is more likely to prepare for emergencies and be ready when they occur.
Public Information Process
<p>The process of getting accurate information to the public is the same before, during, and after an incident and includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gathering information.• Verifying the information.• Coordinating the information.• Disseminating the information.
Public Information Officer (PIO) Functions
<p>The PIO supports the EOC. The PIO advises the Incident Commander, EOC Director, and the MAC Group on all public information matters relating to the management of the incident. The PIO handles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inquiries from the media, the public, and elected officials.• Emergency public information and warnings.• Rumor monitoring and response.• Media monitoring.

Public Information Officer (PIO) Functions (Continued)

The Public Information Officer (**or, if there is no PIO, the EOC Director**) manages public information through:

Developing **community awareness**, including:

- Demographics to select the right media to reach the audience.
- The jurisdiction's and State's governmental structures and how the various organizations or departments relate.
- Key players including those in government, the media, nonprofit organizations, etc.
- The community's recent disaster history.
- The community's culture—the community's values, concerns, and interests, and how can the population be reached through those interests.

Employing **emergency management knowledge**, including:

- Basic emergency management concepts, including the role of local, tribal, State, and Federal levels of government, the local emergency operations plan, and his or her organization's role in an emergency.
- Incident Command System (ICS) structure and approach to incident management.
- National Incident Management System (NIMS) approach to the management of incidents.

Demonstrating **media relations skills**, including:

- Providing information and access to newsmakers.
- Demonstrating an understanding of media needs and operations.
- Respecting media deadlines.
- Maintaining open dialogue.

EOC Director's Role

The EOC Director's main role takes place in advance of any incidents—making sure the system is in place and that Joint Information Center (JIC) facilities are available and ready when the JIC needs to be in operation. This involves planning for accessible work space, electrical systems, phone lines, Internet access, space for camera trucks, and similar planning and logistics.

The emergency operations plan (or an annex to the EOP) should lay out how it all works—who has authority, what each person's responsibilities are, what happens when State and Federal representatives come in, etc.

When an incident occurs, and the incident is of a size and scope to require a JIC, the EOC Director activates the JIC, and the preplanned systems go into effect.

In jurisdictions where there is no PIO function, the EOC Director may have expanded public information responsibilities.

Handout 5-5: Social Media Descriptions

Social Media Descriptions	
Social Media	Description
Blog	<p>A blog (a contraction of the term Weblog) is a Web site, usually maintained by an individual, with regular entries of commentary, descriptions of events, or other material such as graphics or video. Entries are commonly displayed in reverse-chronological order. “Blog” can also be used as a verb, meaning to maintain or add content to a blog.</p> <p>Many blogs provide commentary or news on a particular subject; others function as more personal online diaries. A typical blog combines text, images, and links to other blogs, Web pages, and other media related to its topic. The ability for readers to leave comments in an interactive format is an important part of many blogs.</p>
Facebook	<p>Facebook is a social networking site, allowing individuals, companies, organizations, and associations to post text, video, pictures, links to other web content and combinations of all these electronic media.</p>
Flickr	<p>Flickr offers hosting for pictures and videos.</p> <p>Users can include text commentary, group photos or video. Editing can be performed directly on the site, including embedding certain graphics, links, or metadata such as the GPS coordinates, date and time an image was recorded in their content files.</p> <p>This media can then be embedded in a blog, Facebook page, or linked to a Tweet.</p>
Citizen Journalism	<p>Citizen journalism is based upon public citizens playing an active role in the process of collecting, reporting, analyzing, and disseminating news and information. The availability of technology such as smartphones with cameras and video capability makes it possible for individuals to report breaking news often more quickly than traditional media reporters.</p>
Instagram	<p>Instagram is a social networking application made for sharing photos and videos from a smartphone.</p>
LinkedIn	<p>LinkedIn® is used more often by professionals, associations, or groups. It is a good platform to form communities of practice, for continual learning, and sharing of better practices. However, all these sites, and others like them, allow groups with a common interest to share media through a common platform.</p>

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Micro-blog	A micro-blog is a form of multimedia blogging that allows users to send brief text updates (say, 140 characters or fewer) or micromedia (such as photos or audio clips) and publish them, either to be viewed by anyone or by a restricted group that can be chosen by the user. These messages can be submitted by a variety of means, including text messaging, instant messaging, email, digital audio, or the Web.
Photo Sharing	Photo sharing is the publishing or transfer of a user's digital photos online through both Web sites and applications that facilitate the upload and display of images. The term can also be loosely applied to the use of online photo galleries that are set up and managed by individual users, including photoblogs.
Podcast	A podcast is a series of visual or sound files that are distributed over the computer by syndicated download, through Web feeds, to portable media players and personal computers. Though the same content may also be made available by direct download or streaming, a podcast is distinguished from most other digital media formats by its ability to be syndicated, subscribed to, and downloaded automatically when new content is added. Like the term broadcast, podcast can refer either to the series of content itself or to the method by which it is syndicated; the latter is also called podcasting. The host or author of a podcast is often called a podcaster.
Twitter	<p>Twitter is a microblogging site. It provides users with a platform for short text messages (140 characters or less) that may include web links, pictures, audio, and video content.</p> <p>When the account holder enables the location feature, the geodata the Twitter post (or Tweet) contains can help provide a more accurate common operating picture. This is true particularly when the posts include a picture or video.</p>
YouTube	<p>YouTube offers hosting for pictures and videos.</p> <p>Users can include text commentary, group photos or video. Editing can be performed directly on the site, including embedding certain graphics, links, or metadata such as the GPS coordinates, date and time an image was recorded in their content files.</p> <p>This media can then be embedded in a blog, Facebook page, or linked to a Tweet.</p>

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Social Networking	<p>Social networking sites are online communities that connect people who share interests and/or activities, or who are interested in exploring the interests and activities of others.</p> <p>The most popular social networking sites have groups, which offer chat boards for members. There are also professional social networking sites with sections for jobs. All social networking sites allow users to find people they know among the members or look for other members with similar interests or affiliations. These sites make it easy to establish networks of contacts.</p>
Video Blog	<p>A video blog, sometimes shortened to a vlog or vidblog, is a form of blog for which the medium is video. Entries are made regularly and often combine embedded video or a video link with supporting text, images, and other metadata. Vlogs also often take advantage of Web syndication to allow for the distribution of video over the Internet using either the RSS or Atom syndication formats, for automatic aggregation and playback on mobile devices and personal computers.</p>
Video Sharing	<p>Videos can be used to communicate information on Web sites or on video hosting sites. Video is a good choice for sharing information because of its audio and visual components.</p>
Web 2.0, Webcast	<p>A Web 2.0 site allows users to interact and collaborate with each other in a social media dialogue as creators of user-generated content in a virtual community.</p> <p>A webcast is a media presentation distributed over the Internet using streaming media technology.</p>

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Wiki	<p>A wiki is a page or collection of Web pages designed to enable anyone who accesses it to contribute or modify content, using a simplified markup language. Wikis are often used to create collaborative Web sites and to power community Web sites.</p> <p>A defining characteristic of wiki technology is the ease with which pages can be created and updated. Generally, there is no review before modifications are accepted. Many wikis are open to alteration by the general public without requiring them to register user accounts. Sometimes logging in for a session is recommended, to create a “wiki-signature” cookie for signing edits automatically. Many edits, however, can be made in real-time and appear almost instantly online. This feature can facilitate abuse of the system. Private wiki servers require user authentication to edit pages, and sometimes even to read them.</p>